



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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CONTACT: Joseph Donovan, Communications Officer, (608) 266-3559

New network to expand school and library access

DOA completes contract for state BadgerNet Converged Network

MADISON—State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster noted today that with work completed by the Department of Administration in negotiating a contract for the new BadgerNet Converged Network school districts and public libraries will soon have expanded access to the Internet and other digital resources.

“Most school districts and public libraries throughout the state depend on BadgerNet to provide them with connectivity to the Internet, distance education, and access to over 10,000 periodicals through the Department of Public Instruction’s BadgerLink program,” Burmaster said. “However, in the current network, many of our school districts and libraries have reached the limit of their bandwidth. The new BadgerNet Converged Network will provide them with better access to the latest infrastructure technology at very affordable costs.”

Beginning in 2001, DPI, DOA, Technology for Educational Achievement (TEACH) staff, and others served on various BadgerNet planning and work committees to begin efforts to replace the current data and video network contracts with a single, converged network. The new BadgerNet Converged Network is based on an extensive needs assessment conducted in the education and library communities.

Schools that are part of the current video distance education network will be migrated to the new network and will be able to use most of the same equipment in their distance classrooms. TEACH discounted video lines will continue to be \$250 per month and will have an option for expanded bandwidth for Internet and other applications for schools and libraries that demonstrate a need. Schools currently receiving TEACH discounted T-1 (data) lines at \$100 per month will be able to continue at this rate. However, because of the converged network’s capabilities, schools and libraries needing bandwidth beyond a T-1 line will be able to get considerably more bandwidth for just \$250 per month.

(more)

Although a detailed timeline for conversion is still being developed, Burmaster encourages all schools and libraries to respond promptly to requests from DOA's TEACH staff for information for the conversion process. BadgerNet staff project that conversion to the new network will be completed in the summer of 2006.

"The Department of Public Instruction will continue to work closely with DOA's TEACH and BadgerNet staff as well as our school and library communities as this important network initiative moves forward," Burmaster said.

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NOTE: For more information on the conversion and other details, visit the BadgerNet Converged Network website at < <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/badgernet> >.